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PREVENTION,
AWARENESS,
AND RESOURCE
CENTER

Responding to Stalking: Risk Assessment & Safety Planning

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STALKING DEFINITION: BEHAVIORAL

Stalking is a pattern of behavior directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel **FEAR** for the person's safety or the safety of others; or suffer substantial emotional distress.



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DANGEROUS

- * Stalking often co-occurs with physical assault and sexual violence, including rape.
- * **20%** of stalkers use **weapons** to threaten or harm victims.
- * **76%** of intimate partner femicides included stalking in the year prior.

McFarlane, J., Campbell, J.C., Wilt, S., Ulrich, Y., & Xu, X. (1999.) Stalking and Intimate Partner Femicide. *Homicide Studies* 3 (4), 300-316.
Mohandie, K., Moley, J.R., McGowan, M.G., & Williams, J. (2006). The RECON Typology of Stalking: Reliability and Validity Based upon a Large Sample of North American Stalkers. *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 51 (1), 147-155.

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Study of Women with Protective Orders

Women who were **abused and stalked** experienced significantly **higher rates** of the following than women who were abused but not stalked:



- Verbal abuse, degradation, jealousy and control
- Serious threats
- Moderate and severe physical violence
- Sexual violence and sexual assault
- Threats to kill and threats with a weapon
- Being beat up, attacks with a weapon and injury

Logan, T.K., Shannon, L., & Cole, J. (2007). Stalking Victimization in the Context of Intimate Partner Violence. *Violence Vict.* 22 (6), 669-683.

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Stalking is a Lethality Risk

Top 10 risk factors for intimate partner homicide	Risk for male perpetrated & female IPH victimization
1) Direct access to guns	11-fold increase in risk of IPH
2) Threatened victim with a weapon	7-fold increase in risk
3) Non-fatal strangulation	7-fold increase in risk
4) Perpetrated rape/forced sex	5-fold increase in risk
5) Controlling behaviors	6-fold increase in risk
6) Threatened to harm the victim	4-fold increase in risk
7) Abused victim while pregnant	4-fold increase in risk
8) Perpetrated stalking	3-fold increase in risk of IPH
9) Jealousy	2-fold increase in risk
10) Substance abuse	2-fold increase in risk

Spencer, C.M. & Smith, S.M. (2018). Risk Factors for Male Perpetration and Female Victimization of Intimate Partner Homicide: A Meta-Analysis. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse* 21(3): 527-540.

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Risk Assessment

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Relationships, Violence, & Threats



%	Intimate Partner	Acquaintance	Private Stranger	Public Figure
Presence of Threats	83	66	50	18
Presence of Violence	74	50	36	2

Mohandie, K., Meloy, J.R., McGowan, M.G., & Williams, J. (2006). The RECON Typology of Stalking: Reliability and Validity Based upon a Large Sample of North American Stalkers. *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 51(1): 147-155.

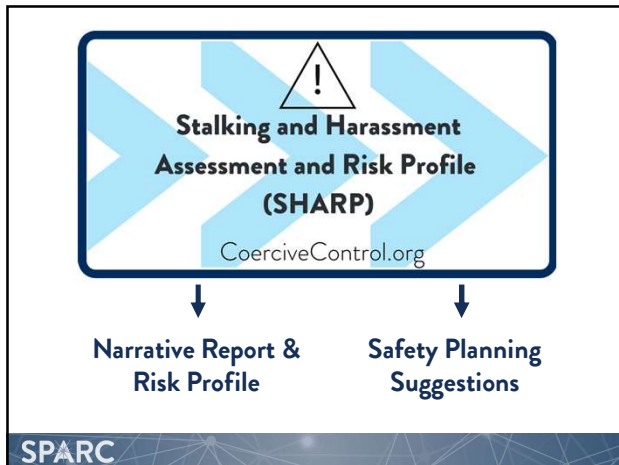
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Victim perceptions of risk are a strong predictor of re-assault, equal to or even better than risk management tools

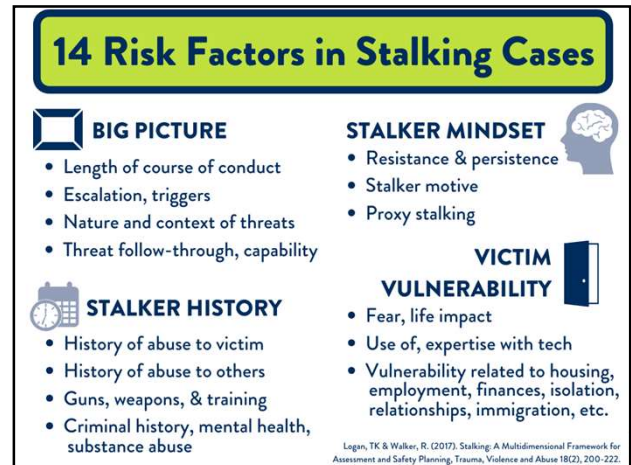
TK Logan & Robert Walker, Stalking: A Multidimensional Framework for Assessment and Safety Planning, 18(2) *Trauma, Violence & Abuse* 200-22 (2017)

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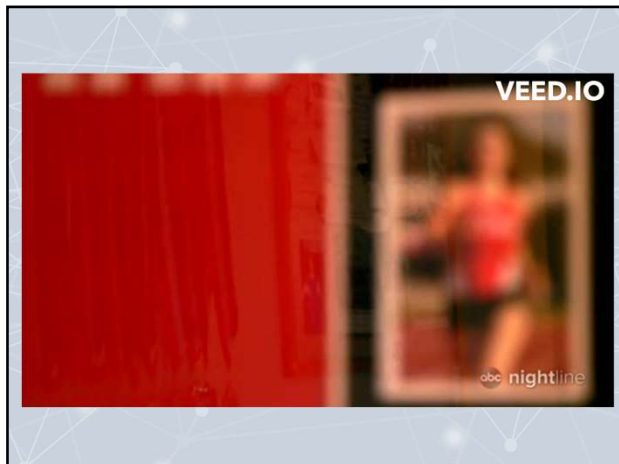
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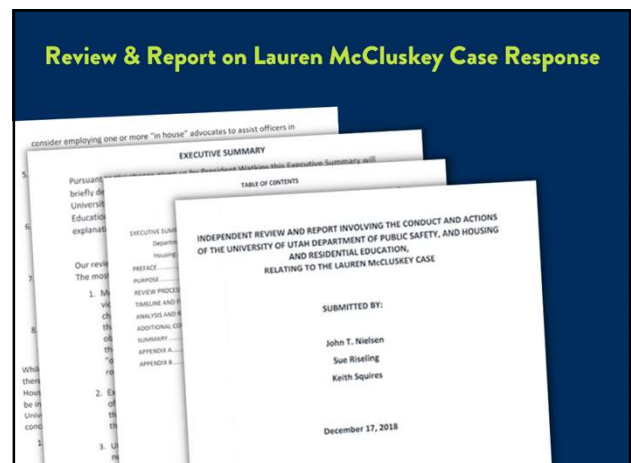
October 22, 2019



- * Rowland dragged her across the parking lot, causing her to drop her phone and belongings.
- * Rowland dragged Lauren to a different spot in the parking lot, where he forced her into the back seat of a car he had driven to campus. While in the back seat, Rowland shot Lauren several times, killing her.
- * An acquaintance of Rowland's picked him up from campus.
- * Salt Lake police found Rowland and pursued him on foot into Trinity A.M.E. Church on 239 Martin Luther King Blvd. Rowland shot himself as police entered the church.

Johnson, E. & DeWitt, K. (18 May 2020). Top Stories: Timeline of Lauren McCluskey's murder and events following her death. ABC4 News.

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What Went Wrong? Primary Findings

- **Officers missed that Rowland was on parole.**
 - * No policies or procedures requiring that officers check "offender status"
 - * Criminal history check did not include parole status
- **Campus was understaffed and undertrained.**
 - * Case never identified as related to domestic violence. Lack of training, no lethality assessment completed
 - * Important e-mail sent to a staff member who was off that day wasn't read until after the homicide
- **UUPS did not have working relationship with Center for Student Wellness/victim advocates**
- **Most contacts with Lauren were over e-mail or phone rather than in-person**

Nielsen, J.T., Rising, S., & Squires, K. Independent Review and Report Involving the Conduct and Actions of University of Utah Department of Public Safety, and Housing and Residential Education, Relating to the Lauren McCluskey Case. (2018).

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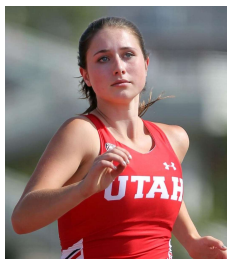
Information-Sharing

Information not shared between departments. For example:

- * No mechanism to share routine calls for service. UUPS does not know that Lauren's requested a security escort to retrieve her car.
- * Lauren's friends made multiple reports through Housing staff -- concerns about the relationship being unhealthy, Rowland's easy access to Lauren's housing, and Rowland's threats to bring a firearm to campus. These were not communicated to UUPS, Behavioral Intervention Team, or handled internally in a timely manner.

Nielsen, J.T., Rising, S., & Squires, K. Independent Review and Report Involving the Conduct and Actions of University of Utah Department of Public Safety, and Housing and Residential Education, Relating to the Lauren McCluskey Case. (2018).

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"As we examined the totality of this troubling event, we discovered that there were several indications that Lauren McCluskey was in trouble. Had victim advocates been engaged, Lauren might not have been left to assess the dangerousness of her situation on her own. There were shortcomings both systemically and individually. There were several instances where the lack of coordination was evident within UUPS, within Housing, and among various campus departments. While the University has developed systems and programs to respond to student welfare issues, those systems were not engaged nor utilized."

Nielsen, J.T., Rising, S., & Squires, K. Independent Review and Report Involving the Conduct and Actions of University of Utah Department of Public Safety, and Housing and Residential Education, Relating to the Lauren McCluskey Case. (2018).

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Responding to Victims

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First Response

Any time a victim reports any kind of harassing behavior:

- Consider the possibility of a stalking case
- Determine whether this is an isolated incident or repeated conduct



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CONSIDER MANDATORY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS



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Victim Contact

FIRST CONTACT IS CRITICAL!

You may determine how or if the victim continues to work with law enforcement



HAVE RESOURCES ON HAND

Palm cards, local victim assistance resources

PRESERVE EVIDENCE RIGHT NOW

For example, take photos of text messages



PREPARE FOR THE LONG HAUL

Your efforts now help the victim and your fellow officers down the road

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How do Victims Cope?

Move
INWARD



Move
AWAY



Move
TOWARDS



Move
AGAINST



Move
OUTWARD



Spitzberg, B.H. & Cupach, W. (2007) The State of the Art of Stalking: Taking Stock of the Emerging Literature. Aggression and Violent Behavior 12(1): 64-86.

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Self-Protective Actions Taken

- 63% Blocked unwanted calls/messages/other
- 27% Changed personal information
- 24% Changed day-to-day activities
- 23% Self-defensive action/security measure
- 9% Applied for a restraining/protective/no-contact order

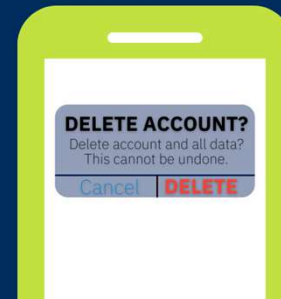


78% of stalking victims take some kind of protective action

Truman, J.L., & Morgan, R.E. (2022). Stalking Victimization, 2019. Washington, DC: US DOJ, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Special Report.

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Should victims just log off?



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“...the victim’s attempts to distance themselves from their stalker actually frustrate or anger the stalker, leading to an increase in the physical threat to their lives.”

Quinn-Evans, L., Keasley, D.A., Arntfield, M., & Sheridan, L. (2019). A Behavior Sequence Analysis of Victims' Accounts of Stalking Behaviors. Journal of Interpersonal Violence 00(0): 1-19.

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Advise Disengagement

Recommend no contact with the stalker

- Explain intermittent reinforcement

BUT realize victims engage in behaviors to keep themselves safe.

- Maintain contact, negotiation, minimizing threat
- Contact may be a safety strategy



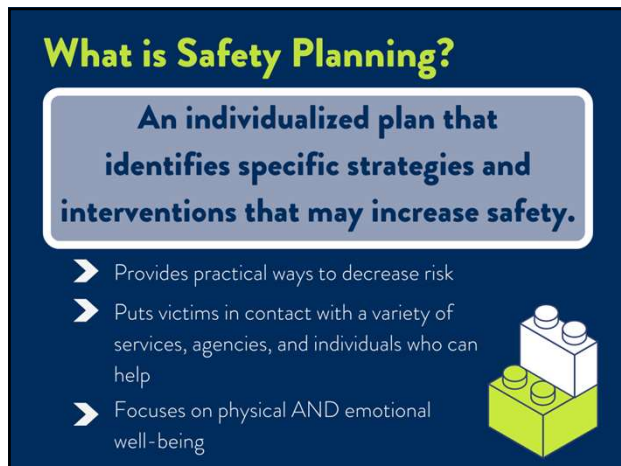
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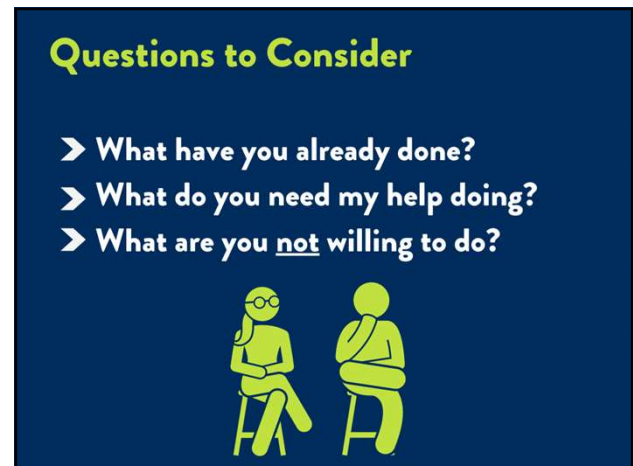
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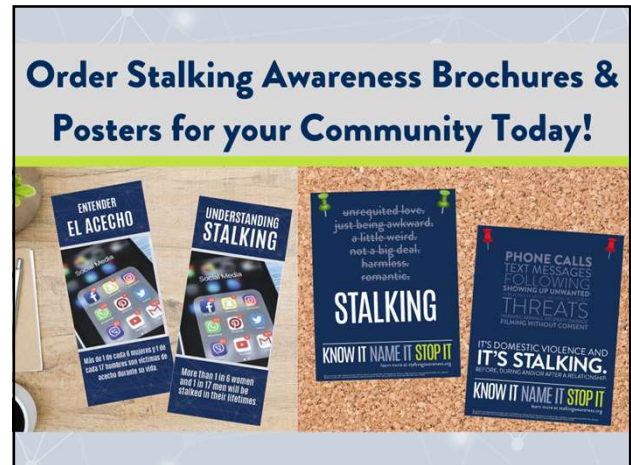
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